

1. A method for placing an item in an automated storage unit, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving input relating to placing the item in the automated storage unit;

in response to the input, outputting a voice prompt of a location in the automated storage unit;

receiving a status message regarding whether the item is in the location in the unit.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

transmitting the input to a controller of the automated storage unit; and

in response to transmitting the input, receiving an identification of the location in the unit, wherein the voice prompt includes the identification.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving input further includes the step of:

receiving bar code information from a scanner.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving input further includes the step of:

receiving speech input.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving speech input further includes the step of:

performing speech recognition on the input.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the input comprises an item identifier.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein the input further comprises a quantity.
8. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:  
sending the status message to a controller of the automated storage unit.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving the status message further includes the step of:  
receiving the status message as speech data.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the status message comprises one of a confirmation of the item being placed in the automated storage unit, and a report of an error when placing the item in automated storage unit.

11. A method of retrieving an item in an automated storage unit, the method comprising the steps of:

transmitting an identifier related to the item to a controller of the automated storage unit;

in response to transmitting the identifier, receiving a location identifier of the item; and

outputting a voice prompt indicative of the location identifier.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of:

receiving input identifying the item.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of receiving input further includes the step of:

receiving a bar code from a scanner.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of receiving input further includes the step of:

receiving speech input.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of receiving speech input further includes the step of:

performing speech recognition on the speech input.

16. The method of claim 11, further comprising the steps of:  
receiving a confirmation related to retrieving the item; and  
transmitting the confirmation to the controller.
17. The method of claim 16, wherein the step of receiving the confirmation further includes the step of:  
receiving the confirmation as speech input.
18. A voice-controlled automated storage unit, comprising:  
an input device configured to receive an identifier of an item;  
an interface coupled with the input device and in communication with a controller of the automated storage unit so as to forward the identifier to the controller; and  
a speech output device coupled with the interface and configured to produce an output related to a location for the item in the automated storage unit.
19. The voice-controlled interface of claim 18, wherein the input device includes a microphone configured to capture audio input.
20. The voice-controlled interface of claim 18, wherein the input device includes a bar-code scanner.
21. The voice-controlled interface of claim 18, wherein the interface is configured to:

transmit the identifier to the controller; and  
in response, receive information from the controller related to the location for the item.

22. The voice-controlled interface of claim 18, wherein:

the input device is further configured to receive a confirmation relating to the item; and

the interface is further configured to transmit an indication of the confirmation to the controller.

23. The voice-controlled interface of claim 22, wherein the confirmation is speech input and the indication is based on speech recognition analysis of the confirmation.

24. An automated storage system, comprising:
- an automated storage unit;
  - a control computer coupled with the storage unit via a wireless interface;
  - at least one wireless headset configured to receive audio output; and
  - the control computer, in response to input of an item identifier, operable to generate location information and forward an audio output, indicative of the location information, to the wireless headset.
25. The system of claim 24, wherein the wireless headset is further configured to receive audio input indicative of the item identifier and forward the audio input to the control computer.
26. The system of claim 25, wherein the audio input is indicative of a quantity.
27. The system of claim 24, further comprising:
- a bar code scanner configured to provide the item identifier.
28. The system of claim 24, wherein:
- the control computer is configured to operate the automated storage unit in accordance with the item identifier.
29. The system of claim 24, wherein the control computer is configured to update a database that is reflective of the automated storage unit, in response to input of the item identifier.

30. The system of claim 24, wherein the wireless headset is further configured to receive a status message and forward the status message to the control computer.

31. The system of claim 24, wherein the status message is a confirmation of a successful storage unit operation.

32. The system of claim 24, wherein the status message is indicative of an unsuccessful storage unit operation.